

Sometimes Pacts Lead to Love by Carerra_os

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Summary:

They do it all out of order but that doesn't make it any less real.

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"Neither of those and I thought we agreed to never speak of dirt bag Jimmy again?" Steve just shrugs as he stuffs another bite in his mouth and Tommy tears up the label on his bottle. "The one we made after you and Nancy broke up and me and Carol decided to go our separate ways for good, I've been thinking about it a lot today."

Steve chokes on his bite, coughing hard as Tommy thumps on his back getting out a raspy little "Marriage?"

1. Pacts and New Homes

Sometimes Pacts Lead to Love - Part 1

Steve is at his apartment waiting for Tommy to show up so they can celebrate his birthday. Feeling a little sorry for himself after yet another bad date as he puts the finishing touches on the cake he made for Tommy, present and a pile of DVDs waiting on the coffee table.

Tommy has a case of beer and the takeout Steve put the order in for thirty minutes ago when he comes in looking nervous as they get everything ready. "You got me a gift and baked me a cake, you're kind of perfect, you know that Stevie?" Tommy asks, eyeing the present once they are settled on the couch with their plates and drinks. Steve snorts, handing the wrapped box over, the silver paper crinkling as Tommy immediately tears into it.

"Tell that to my last date, we didn't even make it past the appetizer, she pretended to get an emergency call but I could hear her sister on the other end asking her how the date was going. I'm sick of dating." Steve says with a heavy sigh of exasperation, this was not how he wanted his life to go, he wanted to meet someone and have kids already, he just wants a partner and he really wants to be a dad but he does not have the courage to start that adventure on his own, unfortunately he has had zero luck in relationships over the years.

"That's a bummer, you know you deserve better than that Stevie." Tommy says before his eyes are drawn to the fancy watch box and he flips it open to find an equally fancy watch, one Tommy had been ogling a few months ago. "You remembered, thanks Stevie." Tommy slips off his old worn watch and puts the new one in place, turning

his wrist to look at it.

"I mean you wouldn't shut up about it for a solid month and I knew you wouldn't buy it for yourself so." Steve shrugs, cheeks pink as he bumps shoulders with Tommy surprised when Tommy turns it into a hug, usually Steve is the one who initiates hugs more tactile than Tommy. "You're welcome." Steve mumbles hugging Tommy back.

"Do you remember that pact we made when we were younger?" Tommy asks, going a little nervous again as they break apart and Steve grabs his plate from the table digging into his lo mein.

"Which one, we made a lot of packs, the one where we would be each other's side kick if one of us got superpowers? Or the one where we would never date the same girl, which technically we didn't do, neither one of us knew the other was dating Jimmy the dirt bag and he's a dude so technically that pact still stands." Steve says after slurping his noodles down, sauce spackling his cheek. Tommy laughs and wipes at his mouth for him before going serious again.

"Neither of those and I thought we agreed to never speak of dirt bag Jimmy again?" Steve just shrugs as he stuffs another bite in his mouth and Tommy tears up the label on his bottle. "The one we made after you and Nancy broke up and me and Carol decided to go our separate ways for good, I've been thinking about it a lot today."

Steve chokes on his bite, coughing hard as Tommy thumps on his back getting out a raspy little "Marriage?"

"Yeah remember if neither one of us were married by thirty-five we'd get married?" Tommy keeps rubbing at Steve's back as he coughs a little more, slapping his own chest to try and clear it. "I know it's still a few months until your birthday but we never specified that both of us had to be thirty-five, what do you think?"

"You really want to get married?" Steve asks, setting his plate down and taking a sip of his beer before chewing on his bottom lip.

"Think about it there are a lot of advantages, taxes, someone to always go with you to functions, kids, we could, we could adopt. I know you've been wanting that for a long time now, to be a dad and honestly I don't know that I'd want to raise a kid with anyone but you. We love each other. We've been best friends for years. What's better to build the foundation of a marriage on than that?" Tommy says very seriously and Steve, Steve is really thinking about it, it is crazy but also Tommy is right there are a lot of benefits and if Steve is being honest with himself the only consistent person in his little family fantasies is Tommy, even if the role is not as the other father in them.

"We already always go with each other to all our functions." Steve says to buy himself a little more time to really think it over. The more he thinks about it the more the idea grows on him.

"Yeah but if we get married your dad can't keep scoffing when you bring a friend to family dinners during the holidays or give you so much shit for ditching them for a friend when you come to mine. Mom and dad would be absolutely delighted if we got married, they're so ready for grandkids and they love you like family already." Tommy leans forward grabbing his wallet and fishing something out of it before grabbing the little pocket knife Steve keeps under the lip of the table for opening things.

"We'll that's because we are family and I'm the favorite." Steve teases, an old joke because Steve could get away with murder when it comes to Tommy's parents mean while Tommy tries to grab an extra cookie and he is dodging a wooden spoon as his mother shouts at him. Steve frowns as he hears something rip as Tommy hunches over hiding whatever he is doing from Steve's view.

"Yeah you're my favorite too, so let's make it official." Tommy says tossing the knife on the table and sliding off the couch landing on

one knee as he turns to Steve.

"Why are you down on one knee?" Steve asks dumbly, sweat pricking at his palms and suddenly his throat feels dry as his heart rate picks up.

"Because I'm serious, Steve Harrington, will you marry me?" Tommy asks, finally holding up what he has been working on, a wrapped condom with a whole torn clean through the middle just big enough for a finger.

"You are not proposing with a holy condom?" Steve asks, that nervousness melting as Tommy grins up at him.

"It's how Billy proposed to Heather." Tommy defends with a shrug, cheeks a little pink.

"That was a shotgun sort of thing, they were eighteen and she found out she was pregnant, they couldn't afford an actual ring." Steve points out eyeing the gold foil, fingers twitching.

"It worked out really well for them in the end" Tommy reminds not that he needs two they were both over at their house for a game night and Billy, Heather, and their three kids the last one an utter surprise at just a year old now, much younger than her siblings are happier than ever. "and he got her a real ring later. This is the best I got on me right now, I'll get you a real pretty one, promise."

"I'm picking out our rings, your taste in jewelry is ugly at best." Steve says as a grin starts pulling at his lips, Tommy letting out a little offended scoff.

"First of all not all of us are drawn to delicate jewelry or even look good in it, you can't make me wear a real skinny ring. My fingers will look weird." Tommy says pouting down at his own fingers before

going serious, licking over his lips nervously before reaching out and grabbing Steve's hand "secondly, that was a yes right?" Tommy asks, makeshift ring poised and waiting.

"Yes Tommy I'll marry you." Steve says, smile quickly turning to a frown at the feel of the makeshift ring being slipped on his finger. "But I'm not wearing this thing." Steve says with a disgusted face trying to get his hand back so he can pull it off but Tommy has a firm hold of it.

"But Stevie, it's a symbol of our love, you have to wear it." Tommy teases with an evil laugh smacking Steve's other hand away when he tries to pry his fingers off.

"The bruising you're going to have from my foot planted against your chest is going to be a symbol of it if you don't let go." Steve growls annoyed at the scratchy wrapper and the moisture leaking down his palm from the packet. Tommy does not relent until Steve's sock foot pushes against his chest, letting himself fall back laughing as Steve throws the makeshift ring at him grumbling about needing to wash his hands.

"You're an asshole." Steve pouts at Tommy when he gets back, sliding onto the couch and glaring at the condom ring, at least Tommy put it on his wallet and it is not dirtying up his coffee table.

"Kiss and makeup?" Tommy asks around a mouthful of noodles leaning in and making kiss noises, sauce dribbling down his chin.

"You're disgusting, no lo mein kisses, swallow your food." Steve says laughing as he grabs a napkin from the coffee table and pushes it against Tommy's mouth.

Tommy takes it and swallows his food wiping at his mouth before asking "So there will be kisses?"

"Well uh we aren't going to be kissing other people right?" Steve asks, tucking his limbs onto the couch and frowning, he is pretty sure even if their marriage is not romantic that he would not be okay with an open one.

"Of course not but that doesn't mean you'd want to be kissing me." Tommy says sliding a little closer on the couch as he tosses the soiled napkin down on the table.

"We used to get drunk and high and make out all the time, we just would maybe do it sober." Steve squirms a little cheeks heating because he is thinking about more than just kissing now and while sex is not a big deal, he does not need it to be happy, but he still wonders. "What about everything else?"

"We've fucked before and it was good too, I'm up for trying it sober." Tommy says fingers trailing up Steve's arm. "If it doesn't work out it's not like we aren't both pros at taking care of our own needs." He adds, Steve nodding absently in agreement as Tommy leans in, Steve's eyes going cross as he moves his face so close their mouths are almost touching. "How about we try a kiss first, seal the deal so to speak?"

Steve huffs flushing more before he connects their lips in a chaste little kiss, he only lets it last half a second before leaning back, pushing Tommy away a little when he tries to follow. "Plenty of time to explore that later, eat your food before it gets too cold and you start bitching."

"Rest of our lives right?" Tommy says grinning as he goes a little pink himself, shifting back and grabbing his food before tossing his feet in Steve's lap, ignoring the huffy little look Steve gives him for it. "So does this mean I get a birthday blow job? I hear that's a thing." Tommy says right after Steve takes a bite laughing as he chokes.

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Before they even get married they start living together, Tommy moving into Steve's apartment, it being bigger and closer to both of their jobs than Tommy's own. The closet space leaves something to be desired but it is easy, going from occasionally crashing in Steve's bed when he is too tired to go home to sleeping there every night. Tommy puts on some weight with Steve always cooking but neither of them really care, Steve only ever worries about his own weight from years of his mother's comments, he is always quick to reassure Tommy he is still handsome no matter his weight. The bathroom could be bigger too, after a year of living together they have a routine but when they rush it is still a lot of elbows leading to little dotted bruises more visible on Steve than Tommy's own skin.

They have been married for six months when Tommy brings it up. "Think it's time to start looking for a house, what do you say?" Tommy asks, slipping into bed under the sheets. He slides closer to the middle, hands reaching out and dragging a half asleep Steve close, careful to keep his cold feet away.

"I want a garden and a bigger closet, oh and a bigger bathroom." Steve murmurs, twisting in Tommy's hold to press closer, his own arms winding around Tommy's waist.

"Be nice to rail you in the shower without one of us nearly dying every time." Tommy teases laughing as it gets him poked in the side.

"Shut up, I'd like to not end up covered in bruises when I'm trying to do my hair while you brush your teeth." Steve grumbles, mouth close to Tommy's ear, making his hair tickle it as it moves with his breath.

"If you didn't take so long doing your hair every morning maybe that wouldn't happen so often." Tommy points out.

"It's my best asset." Steve mumbles, sleep dragging at him.

"Pretty sure that's your ass." Tommy says, sliding a hand lower and pinching at the meat of Steve's ass, just under the hem of his little short, getting a yelp.

"Fucking asshole." Steve's words are sleep slurred as he pushes Tommy away turning his back on him.

Tommy laughs reaching for him again, laughing harder as Steve tries to squirm away weakly, too tired to put up much of a fight. "Sorry baby, go to sleep." Tommy says softly curling to Steve's back and pressing a soft kiss against the nape of Steve's neck getting an unintelligible response in return.

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Steve was excited when they started looking for a house but it has been four months and they still have not found anything they really like and Steve is starting to get discouraged. They really need a bigger place though especially if they are going to move forward with adoption and Steve really wants a yard. A place for Tommy to learn to BBQ while his father breathes down his neck making sure he does not burn anything, a garden so Steve can move on to bigger things than just the herbs he is able to grow on their little balcony. A place for backyard picnics and water balloon fights, stargazing and mini bonfires. A fenced in place for a child to play without them having to worry about them running into traffic, maybe even room for a treehouse.

He decides he does not want to look at any houses this weekend though, that he wants to sleep in and relax, get himself mentally prepared for what are surely more disappointing houses, tells Tommy on Wednesday so he does not schedule anything. It is not their fault, the houses or the realtor, that every house they see is a disappointment, Steve has had an idea of the exact house he wants

for the last ten years. Nothing lives up to it and at some point Steve is going to really have to get over it and settle, maybe for the house over on Pine they saw last month, it had a breakfast nook and Steve has always kind of liked those.

So Steve is understandably cranky when Tommy starts poking and prodding him early Saturday morning, insistent and unrelenting as Steve bats blindly at him. Tommy laughing in his face when Steve finally sits up with a groan sleep mused and shooting Tommy his best death glare, it has never been effective on him though. "Time to get up Stevie, we have a house to look at."

"I told you I didn't want to do that this weekend, I need a break." Steve whines, throwing his hands up only to bring them down hard on the bed angry, he just wants to go back to sleep.

Tommy's demeanor softens and some of that anger and annoyance loosens at being woken and his wishes ignored but only some. "I know Stevie but I promise it will be worth it and we'll stop at that shop with the pastries that you like on the way." Tommy says leaning down and kissing Steve on the forehead the way he has taken to doing every morning for months now.

"I want the biggest coffee they have and all of the pastries." Steve grits out, face pinched as he frowns, turning away from Tommy as he flops back on the bed and drags the blanket over his shoulder. "I'm not getting up until you make me coffee."

"Already got a pot going you big baby, now get up before I force you off the bed." Tommy says slapping Steve's covered ass getting a little half moan half yelp before Steve is hissing angrily at him and batting him away.

"Knock it off." Steve grumbles out rolling to face Tommy again and trying to force him off the bed with his feet against his stomach.

"Not going to work Stevie-baby." Tommy laughs, catching Steve by the leg and dragging him off the bed despite his shouted protests.

Steve hits the ground with a groan as Tommy manages with some difficulty to finally pull him off the bed. "I hate you." Steve grumbles out sulking and rubbing at his ass.

"Sure ya do Stevie, I'll kiss it better for you later, come get your coffee." Tommy leans down dropping another kiss against Steve's hair before leaving Steve to get up on his own and Steve tries to ignore the way it makes a smile try to break over his face.

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"You going to come in with me or am I supposed to try and carry out all of the pastries and your giant coffee on my own." Tommy asks, already knowing he is going to end up going in by himself, Steve has continued to be pouty all morning but as usual after his first mug of coffee he became considerably less hostile. If Tommy was not so sure this was going to be worth it he would have given in and just let Steve crawl back into bed like he wanted to.

"I still want my giant coffee but I only want one of the cinnamon croissant muffin things." Steve mumbles, eyes shut behind his sunglasses and forehead leaned against the window.

"Are you going to stop being a brat anytime soon?" Tommy asks, amused as Steve purses his lips.

"No." Tommy gives him a pinch, quickly throwing his door open to get out before Steve's aimless hand can make contact with him.

"It's going to be worth it babe, stop pouting I'm getting your cruffin." Tommy laughs as Steve sticks his tongue out childishly as he slams the door shut.

Steve does not stir as Tommy comes back and opens the door, not until he throws the bag of cruffins in his lap. "I said I only wanted one." Steve says as he pulls the bag open bottom lip pulled between his teeth as he tries to keep from smiling.

"Yeah and I also know in a few hours you'll be craving another one and they'll be sold out and then you'll be even more sulky." Tommy says as he holds Steve's coffee up to his face, the piled high whipped cream and crunch candy bits popping out of the opening in the lid.

"Shut up, I'm not sulky." Steve denies tongue flicking out and curling around the straw as he laps up the whipped cream before it can start sliding down the edge. Tommy cannot help the way his eyes track it, hand squeezing involuntarily around the cup making more whipped cream shoot up against Steve's mouth. Tommy shifts pants a little tight as Steve finishes and he settles the cup into a cup holder before backing the car out of the parking lot, grinning at Steve's soft little. "Thank you tomcat."

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Steve stares wide eyed when they pull up to a modest size house with a yard on a corner lot, not just any house the one Steve has been imagining raising kids in since he saw it in an issue of home and garden ten years ago. He had been so taken with it he ripped the picture out of the magazine and it moved around his apartment a lot but for the last six years or so he has kept it tucked away in a shoebox with little keepsakes and pictures. This house is it, not something similar, the exact house, a little more rundown, the garden a brown dying thing, all of it including the picket fence in need of a good washing and paint job but it is the house and Steve cannot believe it, he is practically vibrating with excitement as he takes it in.

"I know it needs some work, well a lot of work but I figure we can put the work in." Tommy says when Steve turns away from the house

to look at him with bright eyes.

"How, how did you know?" Steve asks, stunned that Tommy had gone out and found the house he has been dreaming off, the only one he has ever really wanted.

"You showed me once when we were high like five years ago, talked about it all night and the memory just sort of stuck. When I was looking for my dress shoes for your dad's party last month I found the shoebox under the bed with the picture in it and I figured I would see if I could find it." Steve's stomach is a warm fluttering pool at the explanation and his eyes prick a little. "I told you it would be worth it, got lucky to find the place up for sale." Tommy grins and Steve knows he is going to be smug about being right for the next few weeks but he cannot find it in himself to care because Tommy found his house... *their* house.

"I love it tomcat, can we go in?" Steve asks, reaching out and grasping Tommy's hands over the center console and giving it a tight squeeze.

"Realtor is supposed to be inside waiting for us, better give it a good inspection or whatever it is people do when they buy houses before we sign anything." Tommy squeezes back, hand lingering for a few long seconds before he pulls away and undoes his seatbelt.

"I helped Billy and Heather when they bought theirs. I know the basics and if there is anything I can't figure out I'll whine until Robin gives in and helps." Steve assures him downing the last of his coffee, straw making loud noises as he tries to suck up all the leftover whipped cream.

"Good because I don't know what the hell this lady was talking about when she started going into the details, the hell are closing costs, what is closing?" Tommy asks as he gets out of the car, hands moving as he talks, making the keys jingle.

Steve just laughs and throws an arm around him when he comes around the car "Don't worry I'll get it all figured out for us."

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The inside of the house had not needed as much work as they originally feared from a look at the outside of the house. While it had been allowed to become dilapidated the inside had been well maintained. There were still a few things that needed work and they spent the first two months renovating the inside of the house on the weekends before moving onto the outside.

Two weeks ago they had the place pressure washed and the outside painted, and last weekend the two of them had spent the entirety of it replacing the shutters. This weekend they are working on separate projects, Tommy tearing down and replacing the porch while Steve works on the yard, specifically the garden. Steve spent all of yesterday pulling all of the dead plants out and getting the soil prepared for new ones.

Steve is planting rows of vegetables and flowers and fruits, careful of the season and what will grow. He plans to transfer his little herb garden once he knows the soil is good, for now his little planters of herbs traveled from their apartment to live in the kitchen while waiting for the porch to be finished. Steve can hear the distant sound of neighborhood kids playing, the hum of summer heat and the repetitive sound of Tommy replacing the porch occasionally broken up by the sound of him cursing as he tends his garden

Steve does not realize the sound coming from Tommy has stopped until a shadow falls over him and Steve straightens his back. He feels Tommy right behind him, tipping his head back to look at him, he can just barely feel Tommy's knees against his back. "Hey tomcat taking a break?" Steve asks, wiping sweat from his brow and smearing dirt as he squints up at Tommy.

Tommy's hand comes down brushing the dirt away before tangling into Steve's hair in a way that has him shivering despite the heat. "Yeah. How about you come take a break with me, it's getting too hot out here, we can pick this back up in a couple hours when the sun isn't at its peak."

Steve considers it eyes shut against the glare of the sun as Tommy's hand continues to stroke through his hair. "Want to test out the shower? See how the space compares?" Steve asks with a little shimmy, swallowing as Tommy's hands trails lower, brushing down the side of his face to gently cup over his Adam's apple, thumb pressing his chin back even further until Steve's head gently rests back against the bulge growing in Tommy's pants.

"Yeah I definitely want to do that." Tommy says, taking a step back before dropping to his knees and pressing up against Steve's back. Tommy's other hand joins the first on Steve before sliding lower, thumbs catching against Steve's nipples practically visible through his sweat soaked shirt.

"Tommy!" Steve moans out hips hitching as Tommy tweaks them, mouth working over Steve's salty flesh as he drops the little trowel he has been using.

"No reason why we can't get started right here though." Tommy insists, hand dropping lower fingers wedging their way under Steve's jeans, fingers scratching through the coarse hair there.

"Knock it off." Steve hisses and he means it kind of but that does not stop him from bucking into Tommy's hand when fingers circle his dick.

"Thought you wanted to get off Stevie." Tommy teases bulge pressed against the curve of Steve's ass as he keeps stroking Steve awkwardly in his jeans.

"Not where anyone could see asshole." Steve bites off a moan as Tommy swipes his thumb over the head of his cock, pressing a little harder over his slit before slowly uncurling his hand and dragging his hand out of Steve's tight pants.

"Fine, fine party pooper, let's go break in the shower in the master bath." Tommy says hands dragging back up Steve's body before hooking under his armpit and dragging him up.

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Tommy gets home later than he originally intended after a last minute call from Steve requesting he pick up a few things from the store. He is tired and hungry after having to work through lunch on a case but Steve had requested milk and a loaf of bread, both of which he is going to be wanting in the morning and it is not as if he has ever been good at refusing Steve anything.

Something smells good when he comes in from the garage and he goes for the kitchen immediately, setting the grocery bags on the granite island in the middle. Steve is at the stove stirring something that smells divine, looking comfortable but dressy in loose jeans and a cream sweater that Tommy just wants to press his hands under. He does not resist the urge, fingers pressing up toward Steve's ribs as he presses to his back, hooking his chin over Steve's shoulder.

"Hey good looking, something smells good." Tommy murmurs, kissing Steve's cheek.

"It's not ready yet, how was work?" Steve asks, turning his head to give Tommy a small peck in greeting. "Did you get the milk and bread?"

"Long and boring I'm starving and of course I got the milk and bread." Tommy's tone is whining hoping for a taste of that sauce.

"Put the milk and bread away and you can have a roll from the basket in the living room before you go change into something more comfortable before dinner." Steve directs and Tommy huffs and pouts but he does as he is told his stomach grumbling loudly at the prospect of rolls in the living room.

"Why is there bread in the living room?" Tommy asks, already headed there as he pulls his tie loose, stopping when he sees the set up and just stares.

"We're having a picnic!" Steve calls and yeah he can see that. A blanket spread out pillows tossed around fairy lights hanging, candles in the center with wine already set breathing and a basket full of wrapped rolls still warm, even the fireplace has been lit. Tommy frowns when he sees a wrapped gift, pretty green paper wrapped with a yellow ribbon and he racks his brain for what the occasion is and comes up blank, it is neither of their birthdays and definitely not their wedding anniversary Tommy has those all on his calendar.

"Stevie-baby what's the occasion?" Tommy asks nervously as he pulls a roll out, soft and fluffy and he barely tastes it as he scarfs it down before reaching for another one.

"We've been here a year and I wanted to celebrate that so don't fill up on bread!" Steve shouts the last part like he knows Tommy is grabbing a second even though Tommy knows he cannot see him from the kitchen. Tommy feels excited and a little disappointed in himself for not thinking of it because of course Steve wants to celebrate that, he always celebrates everything in relationships. "Stop over thinking it's really for both of us, go get changed." Steve shouts again and that knot forming in his stomach loosens some because Steve would not do that to him, would not just expect Tommy to know this was going to be an important date, he knows Tommy tries really hard to make sure he gets special occasions right because he knows how much Steve like all that stuff and if Steve had wanted it to be an exchange he would have told Tommy because Tommy is not

great with that stuff, does not think about it but he puts in the effort when it is something Steve likes.

"I'm not." Tommy shouts back right before he stuffs that second roll in his mouth and heads upstairs to put on casual clothes that he knows he looks good in, he can still put in a little effort even if the evening is a surprise.

"That soup was amazing but I really hope there is more because I'm still hungry." Tommy says once he has practically licked the bowl, a bit of yellow orange soup caught around his mouth.

"That was just the first course," Steve rolls his eyes as he leans in and wipes at Tommy's mouth with a napkin. He is wiggling with excitement as he pulls back and reaches for the gift. "I want you to open this before the main course."

"Do I get a clue?" Tommy asks, shaking the package and laughing as Steve frowns at him.

"Don't spoil the fun, just open it!" Steve insists, bouncing a little, eyes tracking Tommy's hands as he pulls on the bow letting it fall away before he is ripping into the paper the tear loud over the soft music playing from the stereo.

"You got me a picture of a grill?" Tommy asks with a confused little smile as he pulls out the picture, it is the one he has been eyeing for a while now.

"No I ordered the grill itself but it hasn't come in yet, it's the one you keep bringing up but refuse to just buy so I got it but it's technically for the house so it's for both of us." Steve tells him grinning widely and Tommy is pretty sure part of the reason is Steve wants him to try grilling pineapple, every time Tommy has brought up the grill it is

the first recipe Steve mentions. "I mean I don't plan to use it but I definitely plan to eat whatever you make on it." Steve adds, like Tommy is not fully aware he is in charge of all grilling, Steve is too easily distracted to grill, he gets too lost in the things going on around him that he always ends up burning anything he tries to grill. "There's more, look, those are for you." Steve adds pointing, drawing Tommy's attention back to the box.

Tommy pulls out folded fabric and unravels it, another piece falling into his lap but he is distracted laughing as he sees '*Kiss the cock*' monogrammed on the front in cursive.

"You kept admiring Billy's so I asked Heather to help me out, there's a hat too!" Tommy finally looks down at his lap and unfurls the matching chef's hat monogrammed with the same words.

"You know it's usually too hot when I'm grilling for me to wear this." Tommy reminds even as he pulls it on his head grinning.

"Oh that's not for outside the bedroom." Steve tells him with a wink and it is definitely giving Tommy ideas.

"You want to kiss the *cock* right now?" Tommy asks hopeful, dick giving a twitch, wanting.

"No but I'll give you a kiss on the mouth, save the rest for after we eat the main course." Steve laughs as he leans in careful of their wine glasses as he plants a soft smiling kiss on Tommy's mouth.

"What if I want you for the main course?" Tommy catches Steve by the back of the neck keeping him close.

"I made your favorite from La Celiar, well I tried to make it but I've never made lamb shank before-" Is Steve's way of turning him down but Tommy does not care, stomach going flutter at Steve trying to

make his favorites.

"Stevie I bet it's amazing, you're amazing. Love you." Tommy breathes out against Steve's mouth.

"Love you too." Steve says leaning in and pecking Tommy on the mouth once more before cleaning up their plates pink cheeked as he disappears into the kitchen. Tommy flops down backwards smiling up at the ceiling.

-TBC

2. Adding to the Family

Summary for the Chapter:

They find Steve in a bright room, sun streaming in through the high windows, dust circulating through the air catching the light. There are toys strewn about, some broken and worn others seeming less touched and played with. Steve has got some sort of wide brimmed hat on with a little hole near the top, as he sits wedged into a small plastic chair looking ready to break apart under his weight at the slightest move pretending to drink from a little pink plastic teacup while a little girl covered in freckles with light brown hair and dark brown eyes smiles up at him holding her teapot out in an offer of more tea that Steve readily accepts smiling brightly.

Sometimes Pacts Lead to Love - Part 2

Steve is nervous about tomorrow, another meeting with an adoption agency. It has been a year but they are finally on the list and they are both hopeful that tomorrow is their lucky day. Tommy is nervous about it too but he has always handled stress like this better than Steve, always able to let it roll off his shoulders and relax whereas Steve turns into a tense mess. Currently he is trying to wear a hole into the granite countertops in the kitchen with the force of his scrubbing.

“Are you almost ready for bed?” Tommy asks and Steve turns from where he has been scrubbing the already clean kitchen to find him leaning in the doorway.

“I’m almost done.” Which is not technically a lie but also is not the truth either, the kitchen has been clean for a while now but this is one of the ways Steve tries to deal with stress, tries to distract himself

with menial tasks and it does not actually work but he cannot help himself.

"Pretty sure that counter can't get cleaner, you're going to wear a hole in it." Tommy says moving closer and prying the damp sponge from Steve's hand. "Come on, why don't you go take a hot bath before bed, it always helps make you sleepy."

Steve kind of wants to fight it but it is already pushing midnight and they have to be on time tomorrow, it is too important to mess up over not getting enough sleep. "Yeah that sounds good." Steve says with a heavy sigh giving Tommy a gentle kiss and heading up stairs knowing Tommy will follow after he has checked the doors and turned off all of the lights.

Steve has already slid into the bath, hot water and bubbles rising to his chest, the water fizzing around him from the salts when Tommy comes in and starts disrobing. "What are you doing?" Steve asks with a raised eyebrow.

"I'm going to join my husband in the bath, why what does it look like I am doing?" Steve blames the hot water for the way hearing Tommy refer to him as his husband makes his cheeks heat. He is pretty sure Tommy knows it is not from the heat when he throws a grin over his shoulder, grabbing a towel from the cabinet and setting it on top of the one Steve laid out.

"But you don't like baths." Steve has tried to get Tommy to enjoy them more than once but he always complains it is too hot and boring, even Steve helping him dirty the bathwater did not sway his opinion of them.

"No I don't but I'm making an exception." Tommy says pushing Steve's back away from the edge of the tub before stepping in behind him. "Are you trying to boil yourself like a potato, I don't know how you do this on the regular." He complains hissing as he lowers

himself slowly into the hot water.

"If you're going to complain, get out, I didn't invite you in." Steve grumbles, how is he supposed to relax with Tommy's bitching? He does not resist when Tommy slides an arm around his chest and pulls him closer, sinks down until he can rest his head back against Tommy's shoulder.

"Nah I'm done Stevie, relax for me." Tommy reassures and Steve pushes his feet out of the water, letting his long legs stretch out and props them against the lip of the tub as he lets himself start to relax. Tommy's hands trail up and down his chest and it eases him further toward relaxed with the soft peachy scent of the bath, the heat and the low lighting.

Steve sucks in a sharp breath as fingers scrub through his happy trail, blunt nails against his skin as they move lower. Occasionally the downward journey stops for a moment, fingers retracing their path before moving even lower. Steve's back goes tight when Tommy finally gets a hold of his dick.

"Relax Stevie." Tommy murmurs hand stroking him smooth and slow, his other hand caressing Steve's chest brushing lightly over his nipples and making him gasp. "Hands on the ledge for me." Steve does as he is told hoping Tommy will do something, something more than this slow pace he is teasing him with.

"Tommy!" Steve whines a little huffy as Tommy keeps up the slow pace but his other hand leaves Steve's nipples sliding lower and at least that is progress, keeps Steve from getting too annoyed with him. Steve cries out as that hand bypasses his dick, going for his balls, Tommy's chin a point of pressure where it is hooked over his shoulder digging in as Tommy looks down watching through a hole in the once thick lay of bubbles close to their bodies from the water's agitation.

Steve moans, back arching, toes curling and making him lift a little as Tommy rolls his balls in one hand slowly stroking his cock in the other. Tommy's hard cock rubs up against Steve's back right between his Venus dimples, the water making the glide easy as he moves one finger lower, searching, the others still rolling Steve's balls.

Tommy's finger traces the soft skin of Steve's taint from his ball sack to his rim, fingertip tracing it teasingly. "Tommy!" Steve's head lulls back on Tommy's shoulder more, rubbing his face into Tommy's neck as he pants, hips hitching with each almost press in. "Tommy!" More urgent, more a demand.

"Okay Stevie." Tommy chuckles, twisting to press his mouth against the damp skin of Steve chin as he presses his finger in. Steve plants his feet a little more firmly on the edge of the tub trying to get that finger a little deeper and whining annoyed when instead his feet slip and Tommy withdraws his finger, both hands leaving him to wrap around his torso and pull him back again.

"Careful you don't want to end up drinking bath water." Tommy warns, still laughing as he drags Steve as close as possible before letting his hold losses, hands moving back where Steve wants them most. Steve can feel Tommy's dick just barely spreading his cheeks, the rest of his dick rutting up against his back and trapped between Tommy's own belly.

Steve's knees end up hooked over Tommy's as he brings them up forcing Steve's legs wide until his knees are pressed against the edge of the tub, a plume of bubbles creeping up over the edge. Tommy is kissing at his shoulder rutting against him as he slides a finger back into Steve curling and twisting until Steve is moaning as he finds his prostate. Steve's toes curl, unable to get any leverage to move, cannot move forward to fuck into Tommy's hand, cannot push down onto Tommy's finger, just whine when he pulls it out leaving him empty.

Steve is going to complain as soon as he can get words into his mouth but before he can Tommy is pressing in two fingers, the stretch so

much better. Tommy crooks his fingers, pressing against Steve's prostate a few times, making him lose all conscious thought beyond the pleasure coursing through him, hand stroking Steve's dick firm and fast.

"Come on Stevie, you going to cum for me?" Tommy asks feet firmly planted against the bottom of the tub as he rubs his cock against Steve, water spilling over the edge of the tub not that either one of them cares at the moment. Steve still cannot work the words out, not with Tommy still stroking his prostate like that, not letting up at all, all Steve can do is make varying sounds of pleasure and try and nod his head, close so close. "Cum for me baby." Tommy breathes out, kissing at Steve's neck as he hooks his chin over his shoulder again to watch.

Steve sees white as his balls draw up and his body goes tight dirtying the water with milky white cum as he spills. Tommy cums a few rubs later, water keeping the cum from sticking to Steve's skin. Tommy relaxes his body, letting his legs stretch out allowing Steve's down as he pulls his fingers from Steve's sensitive areas, curling his arms around Steve's stomach as Steve brings his hands down into the water covering Tommy's for a few moments.

Steve pants and twists, Tommy letting out a little groan of complaint as Steve inadvertently puts pressure on his spent cock for a second. That does not stop Tommy from returning the kiss Steve lays on him. "You want me to drain the water and rerun the bath or just rinse in the shower and go to bed?" Tommy asks, arms still tight on Steve's waist as Steve peppers soft kisses over his cheeks and jaw.

"Shower." Steve murmurs, trying to stifle a yawn into Tommy's skin.

"Nice and relaxed now?" Tommy asks and Steve can hear the grin in his voice, a smile pulling at his own lips as he nods. "Good that's all I wanted. You have to get up so we can get into the shower." Tommy tries lifting Steve by the hips but all he gets is Steve's thighs going tense knees digging into the meat of Tommy's unmoving.

"In a minute." Steve murmurs against his neck, sounding half a sleep already.

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They have been talking to the woman at the adoption office for twenty minutes when Steve asks after the bathroom. Tommy does not start to worry until he glances at the clock and notices it has been ten minutes but he does not suggest looking to find Steve until the twenty minute mark worried his husband has gotten lost. Tommy is a little nervous she will hold it against them, like they might get a bad mark for poor directional skills but she just smiles and waves off his apology for the interruption.

"It's a big building, it's easy to get lost in, this happens all the time." She reassures, eyes crinkling as she smiles. "He probably ended up in the orphanage. It's where most people end up after the bathroom, one wrong turn is all it takes." She says leading them down the winding halls and yeah two turns and Tommy is not sure how to get back to her office, all the halls non descriptive until they go through a door and the halls are full of life, holding a more lived in feel.

They find Steve in a bright room, sun streaming in through the high windows, dust circulating through the air catching the light. There are toys strewn about, some broken and worn others seeming less touched and played with. Steve has got some sort of wide brimmed hat on with a little hole near the top, as he sits wedged into a small plastic chair looking ready to break apart under his weight at the slightest move pretending to drink from a little pink plastic teacup while a little girl covered in freckles with light brown hair and dark brown eyes smiles up at him holding her teapot out in an offer of more tea that Steve readily accepts smiling brightly.

Tommy loses his breath at the sight of them, Steve playing tea party with a little girl who looks almost like she came from one of them, covered in freckles all over her cubby smiling cheeks like Tommy, big

brown eyes like the both of them, and thick brown hair, that goes golden in the sunlight the same way Steve's hair streaks when he gets to spend a few days out in the sun. She gives a bright laugh at something Steve says with a little snort at the end and Tommy does not even have to ask to know Steve wants to adopt her, he can tell by the fond curve of his mouth and Tommy wants that too.

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Steve wakes up and something is off, the bed is cold, no line of heat pressed into him simultaneously hogging all of the blankets. Steve flips over arm going out searching, it is too dark to see but he does not immediately hit anything but pillows and blankets. He twists over further to the middle of the bed, catching the nightstand as he reaches out again still coming up empty. "Tommy?" He calls confused mouth twisted into a frown as he leans up and searches out the lamp switch on the nightstand.

Steve throws the blankets off hissing as his feet touch the cold hardwood floors and immediately draws them back up rolling under the blankets to his side of the bed where his slippers are waiting. As soon as he has them on, he slips out from under the covers and grabs his robe from the closet door, bundling up before he goes to find his missing husband, he has a fairly good idea of where he is.

The light coming from under the door down the hall tells him he is right and he opens the door slowly to find Tommy rearranging toys around the room switching the dolls with the building toys. The book shelf looks to have been rearranged and Steve thinks the pillows and stuffed animals have been moved since they walked out of here before going to bed together several hours ago.

"Tommy?" Steve questions yawning and smiling as Tommy gives a squawk, dropping the princess doll he was holding on her head. "Why are you rearranging things in here again? I thought we agreed it was perfect before we went to bed?" Steve asks, amused.

"I couldn't sleep and I just got to thinking what if she prefers the night light by the bed instead of by the door and I was just going to do that and it all sort of spiraled." Tommy admits sheepishly.

"Well it all looks very nice but come to bed now honey bear, it's too cold without you there." Steve insists, coming in and prying another doll from Tommy's hands and setting it on the play table they spent an hour setting up.

"Honey bear, that's new." Tommy says as Steve wraps his arms around him seeking his warmth, still cold but unwilling to go down and turn the thermostat up more.

"Don't like it?" Steve asks, pulling Tommy toward the door and shutting the light out on the way, the only illumination the pink light coming from the little lamp shaped night light hanging on the wall by the bed. "I don't have to use it."

"No, no I didn't say that." Tommy rushes and Steve bites his bottom lip to keep from laughing at him.

"Good." Steve is not going to elaborate because he knows Tommy is going to tease him if Steve tells him it is because he is like the bear honey he puts in his tea, making everything better. It is not as if Tommy needs the ego boost not after their earlier activities where he won their little game to see who could last the longest.

-

Tommy was nervous as hell last night but this morning Steve is the one making a fuss as they wait for the agent to arrive with Claudia. He has gone over the same spot with the vacuum three times before Tommy finally drags him down onto the couch with him, distracting Steve with gentle kisses and reassuring words until the doorbell rings.

Claudia is young enough that she has no hesitation, she has spent enough time around them over the last few months to be immediately excited to be home with them, to see her new home. The adoption agent stays for a bit, taking the offered coffee and biscuits and observing them all together for a while. It will still be some time before they can make it official before they are more than just temporary guardians but Tommy has no doubts it will go smoothly, he has his own law firm making sure everything is in the proper order to ensure no mistakes.

She is well and truly settled in by the time the agent leaves, Tommy playing a game with her while Steve makes dinner. After dinner they let her choose a movie before bedtime and when it is over the three of them head upstairs to get ready for bed. Tommy watching from the doorway amused as Claudia worms her way into three stories because Steve cannot say no to the adorable plea of "Just one more" twice in a row until her eyes are drooping and Tommy has to put his foot down about it being bedtime for all of them.

He practically has to drag Steve out of her room after they tuck her in and each of them has given her a kiss good night. Bullying him down the hallway with little swats to the ass each time he tries to turn back to go check on her again. Steve keeps trying even as Tommy forces him toward their bathroom so he can finish up his night routine. Finally huffing and giving in as Tommy stands guard between him and the door, he starts by washing his face.

"Come here you're getting some crinkles." Steve says with a pout and Tommy rolls his eyes but sits on the edge of the counter and lets Steve apply eye cream around them.

"You're the only one who cares." Tommy fusses but he still lets Steve put even more creams on him.

"No I think they make you look distinguished but at least once a month you get worked up about them." Tommy flushes yeah okay so maybe a couple of days ago he got worked up about them after Steve

was too polite to the pretty checkout clerk in the grocery store. In hindsight Tommy knew Steve had not engaged with the woman beyond polite discourse but Tommy still felt a glare of jealousy at the woman's assessing gaze. It had left a little self-conscious for the rest of the day until Steve had told him how handsome he was as he dropped to his knees and made Tommy forget all about his worries as Steve took him between his lips.

Tommy does not mention that though because he knows it is just in his head when he worries. Steve has never been anything like his dad, he finds cheating detestable, cannot understand how his mom stays with his dad even now. Every once in a while though that part of Tommy that cannot believe he gets to have Steve, that they work so well together, that they are so happy, rears its ugly head and somehow without Tommy ever having to express them aloud Steve always snubs them right out.

"Maybe I should go check on her one more time." Steve says for the tenth time this hour moving to climb out of bed.

Tommy rolls over, quickly sliding an arm around Steve and pulling him back down to the bed, wrapping around him like an octopus so he cannot move. "No it's only been twenty minutes and both doors are open. We'll hear her if she calls now go to sleep baby." Tommy says firmly, reaching over Steve and flipping the light switch off.

Steve wiggles around a bit, Tommy moving to accommodate him but not letting go. Cuddling each night is one of the things Tommy loves about being married. Sure they do not always wake up pressed together, both moving around in their sleep but falling asleep curled up together is the best thing in Tommy's opinion especially when Steve shifts lower and tucks his face in against Tommy's neck. Breath warm as it fans across his skin, evening out a few minutes later as Steve drifts to sleep and Tommy just tucks his face against Steve's hair and lets his eyes fall closed, sleep taking him shortly after.

They both wake with a start, Steve falling off his side of the bed when they hear a little scream. Tommy throws the covers back and shoots out of the room, Steve not far behind him as they rush into Claudia's room looking for any significant danger and coming up empty.

"Hey what's wrong what happened?" Steve asks moving to comfort Claudia wrapped up in her blanket clutching a stuffed cat as she cries. Tommy moves over to the window moving aside the curtains and checking it, satisfied when he finds it locked.

"Monsters." She chokes out throwing herself at Steve when he settles next to her on the bed little fists clenched in his nightshirt.

"Where, I'll scare them off." Tommy says at once, he has had plenty of practice over the years with Billy and Heather's brood. Steve is smiling at him over Claudia's head as she points her little fist at the closet and Tommy puffs his chest out and makes a show of scaring the monster off. It makes her tears dry up, makes both her and Steve smile and laugh.

"Do you think it's safe to sleep now?" Steve asks as Tommy comes over kneeling next to her bed, elbows pressing down the mattress as he leans in close to them. Tommy grins pleased as she nods her head yes but she goes a little panicked, fresh tears dripping down her cheek when Steve stands and tries to tuck her in.

"What's wrong Claudia, you have to tell us what you want." Tommy says calmly, curling one of his hands around her little fist clenched in the blanket her other has a white knuckle grip in Steve's shirt.

"Stay." She says not a question, a demand that neither of them are willing to deny.

"Okay, sweetie, how about we all go sleep in our room?" Steve asks,

pointing toward the hall and she just shakes her head no.

"Are you sure, there's no way all three of us can fit in this bed Claudia." Tommy tries and it looks like she might waver for a second but once again she shakes her head no.

"Okay but if we're going to sleep in here I have to get some things so you have to let go of my shirt. I'll be right back and Tommy will stay here in the meantime, okay." Steve says reassuringly as he edges away and after a few gentle tugs Claudia lets him go. "Maybe Tommy can keep you occupied with one last story while I get everything set up" that wipes the weary look off of her face and her big brown eyes are back on Tommy as Steve leaves.

"Alright Claud what will it be, hum, got some of my favorites over here, how about The Lorax, Steve really likes this one too, my mom used to read it to us when we were a few years older than you." Tommy says holding up the book waiting for a nod of approval before he settles back on the edge of the bed Claudia wiggling her way under one of his arms to press to his side as he opens the book and starts reading.

Tommy is doing the voices and everything as Steve comes in with the blow up mattress they used when they first moved in and were painting and doing a few renovations upstairs. Claudia watches him curiously for a few minutes as he starts blowing it up before getting engrossed back into the story. Steve disappears again once the mattress is full and comes back with sheets and blankets, making another trip out for more blankets and some pillows. By the time Tommy finishes reading the mattress looks almost like a real bed.

"Alright baby girl, I think it's time we all tried to get some more sleep." Tommy says and Claudia is nearly back to sleep, eyes half closed where she slumps against him giving a noise of discontent at being moved. "We'll be right here, not leaving." He reassures as he tucks her under the covers before joining Steve on the air mattress.

"You know she's already asleep, she wouldn't even notice if we left." Tommy jokes, getting a shove to his shoulder for it.

"We said we'd stay." Steve reminds as their sides press together the bed dipping under their weight.

"Okay but we aren't making this a habit, my back can't handle too much of this." Tommy grumbles, tugging Steve where he wants him and curling up despite the way the mattress keeps trying to get them into a different position.

"Definitely not a habit, I don't think this shitty mattress has enough life left in it for that." Steve mumbles back already starting to drift and Tommy just presses his face to the back of Steve's neck and lets himself follow.

At some point during the night Tommy stirs briefly to a small body climbing onto the mattress with them, a stuffed cat smacking him in the face as Claudia cuddles up to the both of them. Tommy just shifts until the cat's bean filled leg is not right in his face and curls an arm around both of them.

-TBC

Notes for the Chapter:

<https://ghostofjellyfishforgotten.tumblr.com/>

3. The Love Has Always Been There

Summary for the Chapter:

"Stop pulling at your tie tomcat, you're going to wrinkle your suit." Tommy huffs as Steve draws his hands away from his suit, nervous sweat pricking at them. "You've got this, you already got the promotion, this announcement is just a formality, an excuse to have a party, you have nothing to worry about. Enjoy the fancy party."

"What if they change their minds at the last minute?" Tommy whines and Steve presses against his side, arm curling around his waist as he leads him from the crowd.

Sometimes Pacts Lead to Love - Part 3

"Zoo! Zoo!" Has been the running mantra coming out of Claudia's mouth all morning, excited by their plans for the day.

"Breakfast first Claud now chew with your mouth closed or you'll have to change again before we can go." Steve says laughing as he wipes syrup from her mouth, she is definitely picking up some of their messy eating habits. "You too tomcat." Steve says fondly as he drags the napkin over Tommy's syrup sticky mouth as well.

"I just wanted to give you a little sugar." Tommy says dragging Steve down for a sticky kiss as Claudia laughs at their antics.

"Dick." Steve murmurs low enough for Claudia not to hear nose scrunched as he tries to lick the sticky residue from his lips.

"You love it." Tommy grins and Steve hums in agreement and lets

Tommy pull him close again kissing away any protest Steve might make about getting all sticky.

They do not break apart until Claudia is nudging Steve's plate toward him with another round of "Zoo! Zoo!"

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"Cows!" Claudia shouts when they ask her what she wants to go see next as the midday sun finally starts to pass and a breeze sets in.

"Okay where would cows be?" Steve asks, looking at a map unaware of the looks a few nearby people are giving him.

"I don't think they have cows in zoos but you know what they do have zebras, how about we go see the zebras?" Tommy says, pointing to the enclosures and rubbing a hand over Steve's shoulder as he flushes.

"Right, right." Steve mumbles more to himself, mouth twisted in annoyance at himself before he turns a small smile onto Tommy. "We can drive by the pasture on the way home, there are always cows there." He tells Claudia who is no less excited as she drags them off to the zebra enclosure.

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"I don't think we need to worry about going by the cow pasture now." Tommy says as the zoo is closing, his arms full of all sorts of merchandise as Steve carries a passed out Claudia.

"Shut up." Steve says with a laugh bumping against Tommy's shoulder.

"We can go see them if you want Stevie-baby, I know you like looking at them." Tommy teases, eyeing the redness of Steve's skin with annoyance, he should have made Steve apply more sunscreen but they had both been too distracted keeping Claudia's skin from burning.

"It'll be too dark out," Steve sighs, jostling Claudia a little as he digs the keys from his pocket. Claudia murmuring in discontent, little arms curling tighter around his neck "and I'm kind of tired."

"How about I order a pizza when we get home and if Claudia hasn't woken up yet I'll rub you down with some aloe so you don't start peeling." Tommy offers as they get to the car and Steve settles Claudia into her booster seat in the back. Her head lolling to the side, mouth dropping open still deep asleep.

"I'll rub some on you too, you're looking a little pink yourself." Steve says finger trailing the edge of Tommy's sleeve where it rides up as he stuffs their haul into the trunk.

"That be nice, you first though, you're looking a little lobsterie." Tommy teases fingers trailing Steve's red cheek as they lean against the side of the car, easing up when Steve squirms with discomfort. "Did you have a good day?"

"Yeah this was a good idea. I hadn't been to the zoo since we went back in middle school." It had not missed Tommy's notice that at every enclosure Steve had been just as excited as Claudia. "Claudia loved it too!" He says grinning brightly and Tommy cannot help dragging him down for a kiss, happy that he is happy, that all three of them are happy.

"Let's go home so I can rub you down." Tommy says his own grin bursting brightly as Steve laughs and nods his head in agreement, stealing one more kiss before he jogs around the car.

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Steve wakes up to coughing, Tommy's light on, hunched over the side of their bed hacking up a storm. "Tommy?" Steve asks, shuffling over and pressing a hand against his face. Tommy had been feeling off last night, complaining about a tickle in the back of his throat and a headache before bed. "You're burning up."

"Told you I was getting sick." Tommy fusses like he had not still refused the medicine Steve tried to give him before bed.

"Yes and now I'm going to get you some night time medicine and you're going to take it." Steve says ignoring Tommy's huffing as he starts trying to deny a need for them before another coughing fit comes. Steve steals Tommy's slippers a little too small and his robe before rummaging around in the bathroom for some medicine.

"Here take these." Steve holds out two pills and a glass of water waiting for Tommy to finish them before going back to the bathroom and dampening a washcloth and using it to wipe at Tommy's sweaty brow.

"I can't fucking breathe." Tommy fusses breaking out into another fit of coughing.

"Okay honey bear, you want some vapor rub? I think we have some from when I got the flu last year, oh and I'll get the humidifier, that should help, it has been a little dry." Steve rambles still wiping Tommy down, running the cloth under his shirt hoping to cool him down. Steve is caught off guard by an arm winding around him and dragging him onto the bed, slippers falling off with a clap against the hardwood.

"I don't need any of that, all I need is you right here keeping me warm." Tommy grumbles sweaty face pressed into the curve of

Steve's neck as he rolls them and settles on top of Steve.

"You are going to get me sick." Steve complains, tossing the washcloth toward the bathroom and rubbing Tommy's back until he falls asleep and Steve can finally slip his hold and go down stairs to look for the humidifier.

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It has been two days of Tommy laid up on the couch, Steve calling in sick to take care of both him and Claudia. He only works three days a week now anyhow, choosing to stay at home more with Claudia, his dad putting up a fuss making comments behind his back is nothing new, in all honesty he has been thinking about finally quitting all together. Tommy is making enough to more than support them, on his way to being made partner and he has hinted at Steve quitting a few times but Steve still worries, worries he has misread the comments and does not want to push and disrupt their happy lives. He went to work on Monday before Tommy woke with a fever, so no one is really going to miss him not being in the next two days as he stays home to take care of Tommy, it means extra time with both him and Claudia and Steve can never have enough of that.

He is in the kitchen making soup, homemade noodles and carrots and chunks of chicken and other vegetables from the garden all going into his big simmering pot of broth. Steve has just added a little sack of herbs, when Claudia comes in looking huffy, big freckled cheeks pushed out as she pouts.

"Daddy!" Her huffy tone does nothing to quell how pleased he is to hear her call him that, has not been able to get over it since she started calling him daddy two months ago and Tommy papa all of her own accord and both of them had been utterly giddy. Steve doubts he will ever get over how elated he feels every time.

"What's wrong baby?" Steve asks, turning away from the stove to give

her his full attention watching her carefully as she climbs clumsily up onto a high stool.

"Papa is gross." Claudia says very seriously, little nose pinched as she crosses her arms on the counter in front of her. Glaring when Steve gives a chuckle unable to help himself.

"Papa is sick, we're all a little gross when we are sick." Steve reminds Tommy has gone from simply coughing to coughing stuff up and sneezing constantly, nose running like a faucet. Sweating and bundled up as the chills race through him, pink cheeked and complaining non-stop. At night when he can sleep he sounds like an orchestra of chainsaws and the last time he had to puke he did not make it to the bathroom. So yeah he is gross, grosser than normal but who is not when they are sick.

"You?" Claudia asks a little more considering as she watches him waiting for his answer.

"The grossest, my nose leaks like a faucet and I'm useless, Tommy ends up wiping my nose for me half the time." Steve says honestly, he has never been good at taking care of himself when sick, has always relied on Tommy or Tommy's mother when they were young. Steve cannot even keep track of what he is allergic to. It is always Tommy reminding him of what medicines he cannot take.

"Ew." Claudia's face pinches up in disgust again and Steve is laughing, yeah he is gross when he is sick no doubt about it.

"I know." Steve says with a nod of his head as he turns around to give the soup a stir.

"He get better?" She asks and Steve can hear her shuffle, he turns back to watch her as she leans more on the counter sliding her little arms toward the center as she stretches out her stomach along it.

"In a couple of days, in the meantime we have to take care of him, just like we take care of you when you're sick." So far they have been lucky and the only illness Claudia has had to deal with since she came to live with them, since they became a *family* is a forty-eight hour stomach bug.

"I help." She asks, big brown eyes bright and hopeful as she looks up at him.

"Sure baby doll, you want to bring him some toast for me? I bet he would appreciate some company while I finish up this soup, someone to pass him tissues too. How about we put on a movie and you keep papa company for me." Steve asks already moving to toast some bread in the toaster, he knows better than to try and get Tommy to eat plain untoasted sandwich bread, he is a big baby, throws a fit as if Steve is trying to offer him poison when he is sick, picky about what he will eat when other times Steve has caught him eating cold hotdogs over the sink.

"I help." She agrees climbing down under Steve's watchful gaze, smiling as she pushes the stool in and comes around the counter hands out as the toaster pings and toast pops up.

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"I told you this was going to happen." Steve complains coughing into a tissues as Tommy rubs at his back soothingly. "This is all your fault!" Steve whines pitifully, glaring at Tommy through red rimmed eyes that Tommy knows burn.

"Yeah, I know Stevie, it'll just be a few days and then you'll start feeling better again." Tommy reassures, his own bout of illness had only lasted five days. Unfortunately Steve is not the only one feeling under the weather, Claudia had started a slight cough this evening.

"Daddy." The creaky shout from down the hall has Steve trying to rise despite his own coughing fit. Tommy forces him back down to the bed and under the covers with a firm hand.

"It's my turn to take care of the two of you, I'm going to go see what she needs and then I'll come back and rub that vapor rub on you baby, stay in bed." Tommy drops a kiss to a snotty nosed Steve before he is down the hall checking on Claudia.

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"Stop pulling at your tie tomcat, you're going to wrinkle your suit." Tommy huffs as Steve draws his hands away from his suit, nervous sweat pricking at them. "You've got this, you already got the promotion, this announcement is just a formality, an excuse to have a party, you have nothing to worry about. Enjoy the fancy party."

"What if they change their minds at the last minute?" Tommy whines and Steve presses against his side, arm curling around his waist as he leads him from the crowd.

"They aren't going to, they're already putting your name up on the building with theirs, they wouldn't have paid all that money to add it if they were just going to change their minds, so relax." Steve insists, tugging Tommy into a deserted office and pulling the door shut behind them. "Let me help you relax." Steve says sliding to his knees and working Tommy's pants open.

"Shit Stevie." Tommy hisses as Steve pulls his dick free "what about your own suit?" Tommy asks, hand sliding into Steve's hair, giving a little tug as he breathes out a little heavier.

Steve just looks up at him with a little shrug smirk pressed against the tip of Tommy's cock "Tonight isn't about me, no one's going to care if my suit is a little rumpled." Steve says before swallowing

Tommy down, grinning around the girth of him as Tommy groans before shoving a fist in his mouth trying to stifle the noise Steve works out of him.

Steve bobs his head, swallowing around Tommy's cock careful not to let too much spit build up and spill down his chin, he has to make sure Tommy's suit stays pristine. Tommy bucks sharply, Steve almost choking caught off guard at the suddenness of it as he pulls off for a panting breath.

"Shit sorry, sorry." Tommy apologies, hands stroking over Steve's hair and face, a thumb tracing his lips.

"You want to fuck my face?" Steve asks tongue darting out and curling around Tommy's thumb as he grins up at him, humming pleased with himself at the desperate noise Tommy makes. "Take that as a yes." He says with a little snicker darting forward to tongue at Tommy's slit before the pre coating his head can drip down and soil his pants. "Come on tomcat fuck my mouth."

Steve settles back on his heels and he lets his mouth drop open staring up at Tommy and he knows he does not need to offer a second invitation. Tommy gets one hand in Steve's hair as he thrust forward hard, other hand stuffed back in his own mouth as he tries to keep quiet.

Steve keeps his jaw relaxed, breathing through his nose, hands on his own thighs so he is not tempted to reach out and mess up Tommy suit. It has been a while since they have done this specifically, especially somewhere they could be caught and it is thrilling, it has Steve's dick leaking in his trousers as Tommy uses him. His throat burns, as Tommy builds up speed, hand going tighter in his hair. Tommy's thrusts are smooth for a while, pre spurting in the back of Steve's throat, quickly swallowed down but soon his movements lose their rhythm.

It does not take long for Tommy to cum spilling down Steve's throat, too worked up from nerves and getting off on the thrill of potentially getting caught just as much as Steve. Steve swallows it all down, twitching in his tented dress pants as he keeps sucking until the last spurt, Tommy becoming too sensitive and pulling him off.

Steve is panting tongue licking over his lips looking for any last drops as Tommy tucks himself away before quickly dragging Steve up and licking into his mouth. "Fuck Stevie." Tommy murmurs, hand trailing down Steve's body and finding his bulge. "Need some help?"

"It can wait until later." Steve hums hips rutting against Tommy's offered hand despite his words as Tommy sucks at his neck. "Don't want to wrinkle your suit." Steve pulls away reluctantly, swatting Tommy's wandering hands away as he right himself. "Plenty of time for that once we're home, have the place to ourselves tonight. I for one plan to make good use of it." With Claudia at Billy and Heather's for the night they can afford to take their time for once, no worrying about being too loud or being walked in on.

"Oh do tell?" Tommy asks, further righting his own clothes before leaning forward to catch Steve's tie and fix it for him.

"I'm going to ride you nice and slow until I cum all over myself twice and since it's your big night I guess I'll let cum too." Steve huffs like he is doing Tommy a great service as he lets Tommy draw him close by his tie.

"Do I not get a say in tonight's activities, it is my big night after all, I feel like I should get a vote?" Tommy asks, mouth pressed against Steve's skin making him shudder as he presses them until their hips are flush and Steve lets out a little wanton noise, fingers curling into fists as he resists rutting against him.

"I suppose if you can manage to behave and can get it up again once I'm done you can be in charge." Steve shrugs, turning his head and

nipping at Tommy's lips before resolutely pulling away with a warning. "But only if you can behave."

"Fine, fine spoilsport, I'll keep my hands to myself," Tommy rolls his eyes as Steve heads for the door. "I like when you let me be in charge." The grin Tommy throws him has promises that make his dick kick. "You might want to give that a few minutes to go down Stevie-baby, that bulge of yours is hard to miss." Tommy says with a whistle of appreciation that has Steve's cheeks heating as he turns away from the door.

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"I can't believe we have to sit through this." Steve pinches his brow as Tommy hisses in his ear, shooting glances around hoping they have not been overheard. He is pretty sure the mother next to them, lips pursed in a disapproving way can hear Tommy's complaints clearly enough.

"Our daughter is in this play now shush." Steve scolds, smacking Tommy's hand where it rests on his thigh.

"Our daughter doesn't even have any words, none of them do, this is basically a dance recital, except that was actually more entertaining." Tommy complains and yes Claudia's tap recital had a lot more going on and the music had been less elevatoresc but Steve does not care, this is their little girls first play.

"Tommy shut up and appreciate our daughters performance, or I won't fucking touch you for a month." Steve hisses swatting at that hand trying to creep higher up his thigh, eyes still on the stage.

Steve's eyes widen with surprise as one of the boys dressed up as an avocado awkwardly rolls off the stage with a shout of "Have to pee!" followed by a little groan of pain as he hits the ground. The room is

hushed until "help, pee!" The desperate plea breaks the quiet and parents are moving to help. A chuckle breaking out as the kid back on his feet waddles down the aisle for the bathroom.

"Finally something happens." Tommy jokes squealing a little as Steve catches him off guard with a hard pinch to his side.

"What did I say?" Steve hisses with a huff as the play starts moving again confused about what exactly is going on. He thinks they might be sacrificing the kid dressed up as a stalk of broccoli but that seems awfully dark for a kindergarten production.

"I am appreciating it Stevie-baby, don't get mad. I've never seen a more splendid rutabaga costume in my life. Though come to think of it this might be the only one I've ever seen. You made our daughter a wonderful costume baby." Steve goes a little pink at the praise, Tommy always knows how to butter him up and that hand creeps a little high, Steve laying the program over his lap and blocking Tommy's advances with his own hand.

"I will not get arrested for lewd acts at our daughter's school, stop trying to touch my dick." Steve turns his face pressing close to Tommy's neck so he will not be overheard.

"You'll still let me touch it later then?" Tommy asks like he does not already know the answer, when the grin splitting his lips wide says otherwise.

"Only if you stop dicking around." Steve huffs distracted from Tommy once again as a squash and carrot start slap fighting on stage.

"I kind of wish I had thought to bring the camcorder." Tommy says attention back on the stage. "My money's on the squash." Steve lets out a long suffering sigh offering the disapproving mother next to them a tight lipped smile of apology as he shakes his own head.

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Tommy has been teaching Claudia how to ride her bike today, Steve never really learned himself and had been of very little help but he had tried before going in to make dinner. So it is just Claudia and Tommy out now and he is not really sure at what age it is appropriate to take the training wheels off but she is doing so well and he has seen neighborhood kids around her age getting them off so he decides to offer.

It does not go badly, a few almost falls but she is doing really well, until she is not, until she goes down the little hill and cannot seem to break. She clips a car with her arm before she tumbles down hitting the asphalt hard. It is quiet just the sound of blood rushing in his ears as Tommy runs down the hill to follow her. The blood has him panicking, has him shouting words he does not even understand as he scoops her up, her eyes quickly filling with tears as he rushes her into the house, to Steve.

Tommy is reluctant when they get in to let Steve take her, panic making him hold on tighter and Steve has to calmly uncurl every finger, voice calm as he talks to Claudia taking big shaking breaths as she tries to do as Steve tells her. Tommy is speaking again, Steve giving him a flat look before his attention is on Claudia "Be right back baby doll going to get some antiseptic for these cuts, you're okay." Steve reassures, kissing her on the forehead and curling a fist in Tommy's shirt before dragging him out of the room despite his protest.

"You're being hysterical." Steve hisses tone low and Tommy blinks at him going from confused and panicked to offended.

"I'm being hysterical, our daughter is gravely injured." Tommy hisses, she is all over the kitchen, what if something is broken, he never should have taken those training wheels off.

"She has a few scrapes that need to be cleaned out and bandaged and she probably has a sprain but we have to take her to the doctor to get checked out and that's going to be ten times harder if you make a scene, it's going to make her afraid." Steve points out rationally.

"Doctor, she needs to go to the doctor?" Tommy's panic is trickling back in, voice going high and pitchy until Steve's fist tightens in his shirt giving himself something to focus on as Steve's other hand comes up and strokes at the side of his neck.

"This is what I'm talking about tomcat, she is going to react to your panic if you make a scene so will she. I don't want her to be afraid to go to the doctor, it's not a big deal, it's just to make sure the damage is only superficial." Steve says, thumb stroking against Tommy's pulse rhythmically, helping him start to calm.

"I don't make scenes." Tommy says, trying to get his panic under control, hands coming up to curl around Steve's wrists as he forces himself to breathe.

"You nearly threw hands at the PTA meeting last week, I had to blow you in the supply closet just to get you to calm down." Steve jokes and Tommy knows he is trying to distract him but it works anyway because Mrs. Fieldstone would have deserved it and he cannot help saying as much.

"Mrs. Fieldstone said your muffins were dry, your muffins have never been dry, that old bint is just jealous." Tommy says face red in anger, honestly Steve should have just let him throw that cake at her it would have been glorious.

"Now really isn't the time to be getting worked up over muffins, go upstairs and pack some things to keep Claud entertained in the waiting room, I'm going to go get her ready and when you come back down you had better be calm and collected." Steve says firmly before dipping his head and giving Tommy a kiss, pushing him away with a

soft "love you" before going back to Claudia.

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"I did something crazy!" Steve announces when he gets home, would have been home hours ago if he had not driven around over thinking.

"Yeah come tell me about it" Tommy calls and Steve follows his voice to the living room where he is splayed on the couch looking relaxed, basketball on in the background and a magazine in hand.

"Where's Claudia?" Steve asks, noticing her absences, usually she watches sports with Tommy even though she still does not actually understand and she usually ends up rooting for whichever team she likes the uniform colors of best.

"With Robin and Carol for a godmother date, which I'm pretty sure just means a movie and shopping. What's got you all worked up?" Tommy asks, putting his book down and holding his hand out in invitation, one Steve takes, letting Tommy drag him down into his lap.

"I quit." Steve whispers after he has buried his face in Tommy's neck, Tommy just hums hands rubbing up and down Steve's back as he waits for him to continue. "My dad kept digging in about the vacation time I requested for our trip next month, about how I wasn't invested in the company, blah, blah, blah, you know him and, and I just snapped I couldn't take it anymore and I quit." Steve's eyes are wet by the time he finishes.

"Good, shouldn't be working there anyway you hate it." Tommy murmurs and it helps sooth the worries Steve has been fighting with, the worries that Tommy was going to be mad at him but he still asks.

"You're not mad?" He is a little startled by the laugh that Tommy lets

out.

"Fuck no, I have been trying to talk you into finally quitting all together for years now. You deserve so much better than to put up with working for your shitty father." Tommy reassures, turning his head and pressing their foreheads together.

"But-" Steve tries to start because what about money and the house and everything else catching in his throat as Tommy shakes his head.

"You know money we are good, even if I hadn't gotten that raise we would be fine, there's no reason you shouldn't stay home full time with Claudia if that's what you want to do." Tommy says kissing Steve softly as a smile breaks across his lips because yeah that is exactly what he wants, he just did not know how to bring it up. "You know we could even afford a dog... and another one, another kid that is, we could add to the family."

"I think Claud would like a dog and a brother." Steve happily says all the fears and worries completely melting away as Tommy draws him into a smiling kiss. "I love you." Steve breathes against Tommy's mouth as the kiss breaks.

"Love you too." Tommy drags him in for another kiss but Steve frowns, he wants to make it clear. Tommy is frowning now too, mirroring his expression with a questioning quirk of his head when Steve pulls back.

"No, I'm in love with you." Steve says firmly, nerves rolling his tummy as he licks over his lips, unsure, he does not appreciate the way Tommy snorts, tries to draw back further assuming the worst but Tommy tightens his hold keeping him close.

"Stevie, Stevie, Stevie no, no don't." Tommy murmurs, eyes soft and mouth spreading as he smiles. "I'm so fucking in love with you, have

been for years, probably long before I ever realized." Tommy's hands drag up his back pulling him down and Steve lets them, wants to go where they lead.

"Yeah?" Steve asks mouths close but not yet touching as he drags his bottom lips between his teeth.

"You think I would go to that much trouble to find your dream house if I wasn't in love with you, you didn't exactly make it easy, you could have torn out more than just the picture." Tommy's tone is a little bitchy but his gaze is no less soft as Steve lets out a startled little laugh.

"I love you." Steve says again, eyes damp from something other than frustration for the first time today.

"Love you too." Tommy says, catching his lips in a tender kiss.

Notes for the Chapter:

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